

Big Ten Conference Women's Basketball Tournament

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

Michigan State Spartans

Robyn Fralick

Julia Ayrault

Grace VanSlooten

Postgame Press Conference



Just definitely proud of our fight. I think we showed that always, and I think that's something we really just are proud of as a team, and I think we've just got to make sure we don't get ourselves in that hole to begin with and it looks like a different ballgame for us.

Just kind of moving forward this week with that and working towards kind of not letting that happen.

Q. In the second quarter Iowa got a run on you. Was there anything they were doing differently defensively as you were running the offense?

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: I think the paint was really packed. That was difficult. Honestly, I think a lot of the turnovers that happened are forced and completely our fault. I think that's disappointing. I don't necessarily think that their defense had that much to affect us or whatever.

I think the paint was really clogged and us not moving the ball makes it really hard to score. A lot of things to work on for sure.

Q. Grace, talk about while you're here the difference between Oregon and Michigan State, how this year's gone for you.

GRACE VANSLOOTEN: Yeah, it's gone great. I'm really happy here. It's a different culture. Everyone works hard. We all want to win and really competitive. I think I've developed well too since I've been here. I'm really happy with my choice.

Q. Julia, obviously finishing up a career here. How do you feel heading into these next ten days? So many teams in this league are predicted to be able to go into the NCAA Tournament. What's your focus going to be here as you get ready for hopefully what will be an announcement that will be very pleasing to you and your team?

JULIA AYRAULT: Just kind of we talked a lot in the locker room about we have a good week to focus on us and work on the things that we need to work on.

Iowa - 74, Michigan State - 61

THE MODERATOR: Joining us for the Michigan State portion of the press conference, Coach Robyn Fralick, Julia Ayrault, and Grace VanSlooten. Coach, if you would just give an opening statement.

ROBYN FRALICK: A lot of credit to Iowa. I think they're playing really good basketball. I thought they obviously finished the game well.

For us, we're disappointed. I think it's the most turnovers we've had all season. Fouled too much, fouled just even when it wasn't an attacking play and just put people at the free-throw line. So I think those two things are things we know that have to change for us moving forward.

But I loved our effort. I think our kids played really hard. Took a lead in the second half off of playing hard, moving the ball better and playing hard. The way we finished the fourth was frustrating, and there are things we know moving into the NCAA Tournament we're going to have time to work on and we will.

Q. Julia, the matchup, let's talk about the season, you had a great season, you got a good seed here. Talk a little bit about the game and how you thought it went from start to finish and some of your good runs during the game.

JULIA AYRAULT: Kind of like Coach touched on, turnovers killed us before the first media timeout. Just dug ourselves a little hole. I was really proud of our fight. I think we showed that all year, just kind of sticking with it, and we made a good run and kind of let it slip away, kind of like Coach said towards the end.



So just looking forward to this week and kind of working with each other and improving on the things we need to focus on. Just excited to be in the tournament. Obviously that's always a tremendous honor.

We worked all season for that, so just kind of focusing on what's next. Just hopefully making a little run once we get there and obviously very excited to be in the tournament and put ourselves in position to do that.

Q. Coach, anything you really want to work on between and the NCAA Tournament even though you've had a great season?

ROBYN FRALICK: I think we're going to have a good time between now and the end of the season, there's so many games stacked on top of each other, it can be hard to really get back to yourself. I think this week we'll learn a lot from this game, and we'll have time to really focus in on us and sharpen up.

I shared, like playing hard matters, but we've got to be able to play smarter. We've got to be able to put both together, especially in these types of games.

Q. Now that you've gone through the conference, talk about the addition with USC, UCLA, Oregon, Washington, and just the travel and everything that went with it every way.

ROBYN FRALICK: Yeah, we added four NCAA Tournament teams, which is a pretty big addition, two top-five teams. Obviously really upped the level of the league.

I think the travel, it is what it is. For us it's not a huge difference. I think for certain teams it is.

But we always share with our team, when it's time to hoop, we hoop, right? If it's morning, night, West Coast, East Coast, central time, that's our mentality around it.

The additions of the teams made our league -- we went from a really good league to an absolutely unbelievable league.

Q. Talking a little bit about the game, you really didn't turn the ball over very much for a game as intense as this was. You want to talk about your ball handling and how well you guys went about that?

ROBYN FRALICK: We turned it over a lot. We had 24 turnovers, which was, I think, the most we had all season. I thought that was a huge problem. I think some of it, credit

to Iowa, they've been good defensively this season.

Then I think we were just so sped up. I don't know if we were just so excited by the magnitude of the game, but we just got so sped up. That makes the game hard when you have to take care of the ball. You have to get shots.

Q. You talked about the improvement and the depth of the league, and one of the questions that different coaches have answered is, when you have teams that are fighting, even at the lower end of the conference, every game and every game matters, whether it's to get into the postseason here or onto the NCAA. How do you as a coach, especially when not everyone gets to come to the conference tournament, how do you as a coach go about facing teams that are playing for their entire season all throughout the schedule you have and you're really not getting a night off from a game that's important not only to you but the other team as well?

JAN JENSEN: I think you have to choose crazy. It's a joke.

It's what you choose. It's the challenge. The challenge is incredible, and it's night in and night out, and every game has a lot of weight behind it. Every game is really hard. I think every matchup is really challenging. It's what you choose when you're playing at the highest level and I believe the best league in the country. That's what you get.

That's also, we share that with our team. This is what we've chosen. There's a commitment that comes with it. There's a discipline that comes with it. There's a constant expectation that comes with it.

We like those things. I think we all wake up a little better when we know those are things that are important.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports